



NEWSLETTER OF THE LONDON CHAPTER,
ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



The Ontario Archaeological Society (Inc.)
Twelfth Annual Symposium

October, 1985

85-7

**ARCHAEOLOGY
OF THE
LAKE HURON & GEORGIAN BAY
DRAINAGE BASINS**

at the
HAMPTON COURT HOTEL
1210 Wellington Road South
London, Ontario, Canada

October 26 - 27, 1985

Information and Preregistration Kits available from:
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EXECUTIVE REPORT

Communication between our Chapter executive members has been continuous over the last weeks in preparation for this month's symposium. All is in readiness for what we expect to be the most successful meetings since the last London symposium in 1980. The committee has put together a first class international program of speakers and has arranged a banquet that will both educate and entertain. Don't miss it!!

During their September 19 meeting, our Chapter executive received a newsletter production report from the editor. This had been requested due to the steadily increasing cost of KEWA. What they learned was that, while the actual production costs are staggering, only a fraction of this expense is passed on to the membership. Subsequent discussions explored the possibility of reducing the research report content of KEWA to lower postage costs, offering a Chapter membership fee option (with or without KEWA) and raising overall Chapter fees to accomodate recent postal rate increases. In order to provide the London Chapter membership with an opportunity to comment, the executive has requested that readers fill out and send in the enclosed, self addressed questionnaire form.

Final items considered during last month's executive gathering included the November meeting speaker (Mr. Rudy Fecteau) and Mr. Bob Calvert's 1985 Chapter dues. Bob was surprised recently to receive receipt for his membership fee, which he had forgotten to pay! He has been an active London Chapter member and avid supporter over the years and so, everyone chipped in. It was a small token of our esteem...thanks, Bob!

SOCIAL REPORT

We have some good news to share with our readers. Two Chapter members recently attained advanced degrees from university - congratulations Dr. Ron Williamson (McGill University) and Mr. Rudy Fecteau, M.A. (York University)!

Earlier this month, several London Chapter members attended the Midwest Archaeological Conference hosted by Michigan State University in order to present the following papers:

Neal Ferris	The Bellamy Site and Historic Ojibwa Settlement Patterns
William Fox	The Odawa of Southern Georgian Bay
Ian Kenyon & William Fitzgerald	Early Historic Trade Beads and Trade Networks in the Eastern Great Lakes
Carl Murphy	Prehistoric Iroquoian and Central Algonkian Interaction in Extreme Southwestern Ontario

Those members who visited Providence Bay on Manitoulin Island during the June Chapter tour and/or volunteered on the Providence Bay site salvage project in August, will be interested to hear that Thor Conway also presented a paper on the Providence Bay site during the **Early Historic Native Groups in the Great Lakes** session of this conference. Dr. James Brown of Northwestern University acted as discussant and expressed excitement concerning the recent Ontario research presented in the session papers.

Eastern States Archaeological Federation
52nd Annual Meeting
Buffalo Museum of Science
October 31 - November 3, 1985

As always, these meetings will be entertaining, if not enlightening. John Reid (University of Toronto) and company will once again host a Canadian Hospitality Suite on the Friday evening. Those from Ontario who plan to attend have been requested to bring beer (Canadian, of course!).

1985 ONEIDA SURVEY

The fieldwork for the Chapter's Oneida Survey funded by the Challenge '85/S.E.E.D. Program is now complete. The executive thanks Paul Antone, James Quigley, Scott Cornelius and all the volunteers whose efforts made the project a success. Fifteen historic sites were located which relate to the Oneida pioneer settlement of the Reserve area in the mid 1800's. Some prehistoric ceramic sherds were also found on one site which dates to the Middle-to-Late Woodland period.

On the Chapter's behalf, two preliminary presentations were recently made to the Oneida Band Council and their Planning Committee regarding a continuation/expansion of this project next year. The response was favorable pending the availability of grant funding. Chapter members are invited to turn out in force during November at the Thursday evening Lab Nites in order to help sort the hundreds of artifacts so that a final report can be prepared.

This month's research article is the second submission from our longtime Chapter member and first London Chapter President, Mr. Charles Nixon.

Middle Iroquoian Settlement Along the Lower Nith River and Horner Creek Drainages

Charles Nixon

This study considers two groups of apparent Middle Ontario Iroquoian village sites; one adjacent to the Nith River and a small tributary, the other along the course of Horner Creek. The first and larger group, consisting of eight sites, stretches across an area of South Dumfries Township and adjoining Blenheim Township. They are located at a no greater distance than two and one half miles apart. In two cases, the distance is less than one mile. The second group of three sites, along the course of Horner Creek, are so spaced that the distance across the entire group is less than two miles (see Figure 1).

The Settlement Pattern

Five of the sites in Group One and two in Group Two, were noted by Wintenberg in his survey reports at the turn of the century (Wintenberg 1990 and

1903). All sites mentioned herein have been under cultivation for a great length of time, most likely more than a hundred years. However, unless some severe surface modification has taken place, there is likely an intact community pattern still there. I have not visited most of these sites in about a dozen years, and one site, Laidlaw (AhHd-14), I have never walked. Two others, Walton and Magda, were located in 1976-77 and included in my license reports of those years (Nixon 1976 and 1977).

In regards to the relative sizes of these sites, they are cautiously described as large, medium or small, and villages as larger or smaller than one another. One hears others glibly pronounce a village as "ten acres", without that person seeming to have much of a clue to the size of an acre. A ten acre site is a large site and there are probably lots of them, but there are a great many more half that size or smaller.

Group One

Beginning in South Dumfries, the most easterly site is Ritchie (AhHc-9), a seemingly small site. The adjoining orchard and buildings may have covered or obliterated part of it. About one mile to the west and in the next concession, the Scott site (AhHc-8) is located across two properties. Because of this fact, it may be known also by other names, such as Gibson or Nunan. It appears to be of medium size, larger than Ritchie.

About one kilometre west of the Scott site is Perry (AhHc-7), the most easterly of those in Blenheim, located beside the Brant-Oxford County line. It is the only site mentioned herein, which has undergone a major excavation (Wagner 1976). It is a rather small site, about the size of Ritchie. This and the two sites previously mentioned, are associated with an intermittent watercourse, which becomes a stream at this point and enters the Nith River near Richwood (see Figure 1).

The Mitchell site (AhHd-2) is located on the east side of the Nith River, about two miles to the west of Perry. It appears to have a large area, with seven widely spaced midden areas.

At the distance of perhaps a mile to the west, the Mackie site (AhHd-3) is also on the Nith River, but is situated atop a high cliff-like clay bank, about 120 feet above the river. Wintenberg (1900) described it as a large site, which had been under cultivation for fifty years. The darkened midden areas are greatly diffused, but still visible. The Perry and Mackie sites were referred to by Wintenberg (ibid.) as "Neutral sites No. 3 and No. 4".

Two closely spaced sites lie to the northwest of Mackie, at a distance of about one and a half miles. These are the Laidlaw (AhHd-14) and the Stevenson (AhHd-4) villages, which are located three quarters of a mile from each other and were known to Wintenberg (1903) as Neutral sites No. 5 and 6. The size of the Laidlaw site is unknown to me, while Stevenson is about the size of Mackie. All that I know of the Laidlaw village is what is mentioned of it in the Annual Archaeological Reports for Ontario of 1899 and 1902. However, we did find a small midden-like area on the north side of the road, opposite where I believe the site is supposed to be. From it we obtained an Iroquoian side-notched point and a small number of chert flakes. This could have been a small outlying deposit of Laidlaw.

Two and one half miles to the northwest again is the Swiggum site (AhHd-20). This was "Neutral site No. 7" (Wintenberg 1903). This site was visited only once by me and a very small amount of material was collected. I have reason to believe that



Figure 1: Ontario Iroquoian Settlement Pattern - Nith River and Horner Creek Drainages

a large portion of this village was destroyed by the construction of an irrigation pond, which can be seen on a 1:25,000 scale topographic map of the area. Ceramic evidence consisted of a few very small body sherds. Wintenberg (1903) noted a very small site near the river, to the north and near Swiggum. This has not been located. Could it have been a satellite of this village? The size of both locations is unknown.

Group Two

This group, situated along the course of Horner Creek at intervals of a mile or less, consists of three apparently large villages. Northwest to southeast they are Ovington (AhHd-1), Walton (AhHd-46), and Magda (AhHd-48). Wintenberg (1903) noted the locations of Ovington and Magda, which he called Neutral sites No. 2 and 1, respectively. He mentioned the finding and reburial of three skeletons at what was later the Walton property, but was unaware of a village site there. These three sites are all situated on "tobacco land", and all are on Fox Sand soil.

Ovington seems to be the biggest site in either group, having, as Wintenberg (1903) mentioned, seventeen "ash - beds". Due to the nature of the soil, it was always a splendid site for surface collecting; being so stone-free, anything lithic just "stood out". I would think Ovington is a ten acre village.

The Magda village was described by Wintenberg as a large site. A small collection was made here in two trips, one with the help of Bill Fox. No discoloration was noted the first trip, except for a tiny ash strip. Following the second ploughing a great deal could be seen, also more artifact material was in evidence.

The Walton village was made known to the writer by a local relic hunter, who had been in search of the skeletons. The site was only visited once, when it was covered with foot-prints big and small. However, the relic hunters were not that observant and a tiny collection was made. These sites are very evenly spaced in the First, Second, and Third Concession of Blenheim Township, and all are located on the same side of Horner Creek (see Figure 1).

Discussion

The area containing this settlement pattern was extremely favourable to the needs the prehistoric Iroquois. Wintenberg (1903) describes the soils, creeks, rivers and lakes, the flora and fauna of Blenheim Township, where the bulk of these sites are situated. The three most easterly villages, two in South Dumfries and one in Blenheim, are situated on Guelph Loam soil. All of the others are on Fox soils, Sandy Loam or Loamy Sand. These soil types have good to excellent drainage qualities and it is very easy to dig holes in them.

Much has been mentioned of the Iroquoian ability to unerringly locate on top grade agricultural soil. This is not about to be refuted. It was observed, however, that in plotting some forty known sites on soil maps of the two counties concerned, non-agriculturalists throughout Archaic and earlier Woodland times also located on these soils. This writer thinks that the drainage property of these soils was an equally important key to site selection. All sites appear to have a slight slope to the south, east or west. At the time of spring run-off, this would mean a quickly drying village area. These people, in selecting a village site, did not appear to be concerned with defensive positions. There may well have been palisade lines, however, the evidence awaits future village excavation.

Village Sequences

Having located and described the sites and mentioned something of the local environment, it is my intention to suggest some possible alignment in time. This can only be attempted by the examination of a very limited amount of material from the area. As mentioned, the only site to have undergone any kind of major investigation is the Perry village. I have some small collections which we accumulated over several years. These chiefly derive from the Ritchie, Scott, Mitchell and Ovington sites. Much smaller collections were obtained from Mackie, Stevenson, and Magda. Very little was collected from Walton and Swiggum, and nothing definitely from Laidlaw. The small collection from Perry was given to Wilfrid Laurier University at the time of their work there. I have a catalogue and photographs of the material and have also visited W.L.U. to examine the larger collection. In addition to these, there are small amounts of material belonging to farmers which I have seen or hope to see in the future.

These small artifact samples display some degree of homogeneity, seen chiefly in the ceramics. In all site collections ribbed paddle body treatment, usually smoothed over, prevails. The pipe complex appears to have been well established by the time of the earliest sites and all villages with pipe remains produced some example(s) of decorated conical bowls. Through these and other attributes, these sites proclaim their affinity with the Middleport Substage (Wright 1966).

There are, however, some traits in pottery, pipes and projectile points, which may serve to provide a tentative temporal alignment. This is to be seen in the incidence of lip and/or interior decoration on rim sherds, of some outflaring pipe bowl fragments suggesting trumpet types, of D and V shaped ceramic pipe stems and also the base configuration of some side - notched points.

Looking at the record of lip and interior rim pottery decoration across the Iroquoian sequence early to late, one can see that this form of decoration, which was extremely popular throughout the Early stage was used to a lesser extent during Middle Iroquoian times, until by the Late Prehistoric period it was greatly reduced. One notices that (human nature being what it is) by the Historic times, it is back in popularity once more along with a corded body finish (Lennox 1981). It appears that by the time of the Uren village (c. 1300 A.D.), one of the original time markers, this form of decoration was still very popular. Although Wintemberg (1928) mentions 23% for interior decoration and 5% for that of the lip, M.J. Wright (1979), in the overall village area, found these attributes to amount to 53% for lip and 63.5% for interior rim decoration. The combined figure for this type of decoration at Middleport appears to be 21% (Wintemberg 1948). By Late Prehistoric times, two sites, Lawson and Moyer, show this form of decoration at 15 and 16%, respectively (Wintemberg 1939 and Wagner et al. 1973).

Only seven of the eleven sites mentioned herein can be compared by examining these decorative attributes: five in Group One and two in Group Two. Percentages for this attribute in Group One are Ritchie, 40%; Scott, 22%; Stevenson, 19%; Mitchell, 16% and Perry, 2%. Those of Group Two include Ovington, 87% and Magda, 73%.

Stevenson, Scott and Mitchell, in regards to this vessel decoration, appear to relate very well with Middleport. This is also true of the pipe forms and projectile

points from the Scott and Mitchell villages. The two other sites, Perry and Ritchie, are quite different. Ritchie, showing this attribute of decoration at 40%, also shows earlier D and V shaped pipe stems, the presence of exterior bossing and some examples of earlier body finishes. Considering this evidence the Ritchie village is very close to those sites of Group Two. The little enigmatic Perry site, which possesses this attribute at only 2%, also has trumpet pipes and Nanticoke Notched point bases, placing it in the Late Prehistoric period. Its size is ridiculous as is its position; scrunched at a hill bottom and almost at the water's edge. One would expect a more extensive Late Prehistoric site like the Lawson or Moyer villages, unless it is a satellite hamlet. If so, where is the parent site? It should be close by, but none is documented to date.

The three other sites of Group One have little or no data for comparison. As previously mentioned, the Swiggum village appears largely destroyed. The tiny number of body sherds found are of smoothed over ribbed paddle finish. From the Laidlaw site as was also mentioned previously, we have one notched point of the Middleport variety, which may relate to it. I have seen one rimsherd purported to have come from the Laidlaw village decorated with a single encircling line on the lip. The very small collection from Mackie has only one whole and two partial rim sherds. The two partial sherds display interior decoration. There are some points and fragments, though, of the Nanticoke Notched style, while a couple of outflaring pipe bowl fragments suggest trumpet pipes were used. Similar point styles and trumpet pipes are very evident at Moyer, an obviously early Late Prehistoric village.

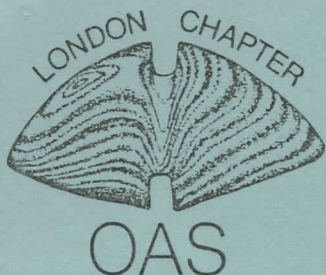
Conclusion

As can be seen from the figures for vessel decoration attributes of Group Two sites, they appear to be clearly earlier than those of Group One, with the exception of Ritchie, which is very similar. There was not enough artifact evidence from Walton for any form of comparison. Its geographic position, however, suggests that it is closely aligned with its neighbours (see Figure 1). These villages are not far up Horner Creek from the Glen Meyer Force and Symons sites. Ovington ceramics also display the presence of exterior bossing and a rectangular form of ceramic pipe stem.

The evidence presented by the small collections of material from these two groups of sites suggests that the villages of Group Two on Horner Creek, plus the Ritchie site of Group One, predate the rest of Group One. They are likely early in the Middleport sequence and are not greatly different in age from Uren. Scott, Mitchell, Stevenson, Laidlaw and maybe Swiggum are well into Middleport times, while Perry is certainly Late Prehistoric and Mackie is of the same era or approaching it. Finally, it is recognized that while a major investigation at Perry did not change the writer's original assessment of its temporal placement, but rather confirmed it, major excavations at any other village could call into question the proposed temporal placement of specific sites.

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KEWA QUESTIONNAIRE

As indicated in the Executive Report of this issue, our Chapter is experiencing financial problems connected with newsletter production. The cost of simply printing cover sheets and mailing KEWA to members is a little over \$9.00 per person for a year. Since our individual subscription rate is \$8.00/year, we have a problem, and you can help our executive to find an answer by mailing back your response to the following questions:

1/ Would you like to see the research paper section of our newsletter reduced to save some postage costs? Yes _____ No _____

2/ Should we separate newsletter production from other chapter operating costs by offering a two-fold membership rate - one without KEWA, the other including the newsletter? Yes _____ No _____

3/ In order to provide the Chapter with operating funds and continue to produce the same quality newsletter, would you be prepared to accept a rise in individual membership fees to \$12.00/year? Yes _____ No _____

a. If not \$12.00, then how much do you feel would be an appropriate rate for annual individual dues? _____